

UR-147

(BUSH)

SACRAMENTO (UPI) -- RETIRING CIA DIRECTOR GEORGE BUSH BRUSHED ASIDE QUESTIONS MONDAY ON A REPORT THE HOWARD HUGHES-BUILT SHIP GLOMAR EXPLORER RECOVERED AN ENTIRE SUNKEN SOVIET SUBMARINE OFF HAWAII IN 1974.

ASKED BY REPORTERS ABOUT A TIME MAGAZINE REPORT THAT THE CIA, EMPLOYING THE GLOMAR EXPLORER, LAST YEAR ACTUALLY SALVAGED ALL THE SUBMARINE DESPITE PUBLIC STATEMENTS TO THE CONTRARY, BUSH REPLIED: "ABSOLUTELY NO COMMENT WHATSOEVER. YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME AND MY TIME TALKING ABOUT IT."

A WRITTEN QUESTION ON THE SAME SUBJECT WAS ASKED LATER AT A LUNCHEON OF BUSINESSMEN. BUSH SAID: "THROW THOSE (QUESTIONS) AWAY. I'M NOT GOING TO COMMENT."

THE CIA HAS MAINTAINED THAT DURING THE SECRET RECOVERY OPERATION, THE SUB BROKE IN TWO AND THAT THE STERN SECTION WAS LOST.

BUSH, WHO PLANS TO RESIGN WHEN JIMMY CARTER IS INAUGURATED JAN. 20, DID SAY IT NOW IS DIFFICULT KEEPING CIA SECRETS, IN PART BECAUSE "THERE ARE REALLY NO PENALTIES UNDER THE LAW FOR DISCLOSING.

"WHEN I SEE A BOOK OR ARTICLE THAT DELIBERATELY EXPOSES OUR OPERATIONS AND RELATIONS WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS, THAT DELIBERATELY NAMES OUR PEOPLE AND THEIR CONTACTS, I HAVE NOTHING BUT CONTEMPT FOR THOSE AUTHORS.

"NOTHING COULD BE MORE DAMAGING TO THE INTERESTS OF OUR NATION AND OUR NATIONAL SECURITY THAN THIS KIND OF IRRESPONSIBLE EXPOSURE."

HE SAID CIA AGENTS SIGN "SECRECY AGREEMENTS," BUT HE SAID THEY ARE "RELATIVELY UNENFORCEABLE, GIVEN THE CLIMATE IN WHICH WE ARE NOW LIVING."

BUSH CALLED FOR LEGISLATION DESIGNED TO PROTECT CIA AGENTS FROM DISCLOSURE OF THEIR NAMES OR SENSITIVE SECRETS. HE DID NOT SPELL OUT DETAILS OF HIS PROPOSED MEASURE.

UPI 11-29 07:01 PES